

# A MAN THAT HATH FRIENDS

## PROVERBS 18:24

Text: Proverbs 18:24

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<sup>24</sup> A man *that hath* friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend *that* sticketh closer than a brother.

Introduction:

“What does friendship have to do with the church, and following the Lord?”

If any group of people within modern-day society should be friendly, it should be Christians; those who have been befriended by God through the person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Note what the Lord said:

### **John 15:14-15**

<sup>14</sup> Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. <sup>15</sup> Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

What is a friend? The dictionary defines the term this way:

1. A person whom one knows well and is fond of; intimate associate; close acquaintance
2. A person on the same side in a struggle; one who is not an enemy or foe; ally
3. A supporter or sympathizer...
4. Something thought of as like a friend in being helpful, reliable, etc.

Obviously, a friend is not someone with whom a person is merely acquainted. They are someone with whom a person shares things in common, and with whom one feels comfortable.

In order to form friendships, we need to know...

## **1. THE REQUIREMENTS OF FRIENDSHIP**

### **A. Requires One to be Amiable**

#### **Proverbs 18:24**

<sup>24</sup> A man *that hath* friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend *that sticketh* closer than a brother.

Friendship is somewhat like your bank account: You cannot get anything out of it if you do not put anything into it.

Someone has said, "Some people make enemies instead of friends because it is less trouble."

## B. Friends Share a Mutual Affection

Illustration:

Jonathan and David

### **1 Samuel 18:1**

<sup>1</sup> And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

### **2 Samuel 1:26**

<sup>26</sup> I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.

Affection for a true friend is like this: A small boy defined a friend as "Someone who knows all about you and likes you just the same."

## C. Friends Share a Mutual Acceptance and Allegiance

### **Proverbs 17:9**

<sup>9</sup> He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth *very* friends.

### **Proverbs 17:17**

<sup>17</sup> A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

Friends do not go around broadcasting one another's faults, or sharing one another's sensitive or private matters with others who do not need to know it. A real friend will not run you down behind your back. They are people you can confide in, and never worry about them telling someone else.

A true friend is a friend as much when things are bad as they are when things are good. They are there when you need them.

Would it not be wonderful if all Christians would learn to be true friends, and stop criticizing each other? You never help a Christian brother or sister correct a flaw by pointing out those flaws to others who cannot help the situation.

Concerning true friendship, someone has noted the following:

“Oh, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts, nor measure words, but to pour them all out just as they are, chaff and grain together knowing that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and then, with the breath of kindness blow the rest away.”

## 2. THE RELATIONSHIP OF FRIENDS

### A. There Should Support

#### **Ecclesiastes 4:9-10**

<sup>9</sup>Two *are* better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. <sup>10</sup>For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him *that is* alone when he falleth; for *he hath* not another to help him up.

#### **Romans 15:1-2**

<sup>1</sup>We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. <sup>2</sup>Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification.

#### **Galatians 6:2**

<sup>2</sup>Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

### B. There Should Be Sharing

#### **Proverbs 27:6**

<sup>6</sup>Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful.

#### **Proverbs 27:9**

<sup>9</sup>Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so *doth* the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.

#### **Proverbs 27:17**

<sup>17</sup>Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

Friends ought to be able to be open and vulnerable with one another. They can assist one another in the struggles of life by giving counsel (Prov. 27:9) or

constructive criticism (Prov. 27:6, 17). There should be a general openness between friends.

### C. There Should Be Sympathy

#### **Job 6:14**

<sup>14</sup> To him that is afflicted pity *should be shewed* from his friend; but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.

#### **Proverbs 17:17**

<sup>17</sup> A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

#### **Romans 12:15**

<sup>15</sup> Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

#### **Hebrews 13:3**

<sup>3</sup> Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; *and* them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

## **3. THE ROYAL FRIEND**

### A. The Availability of this Friend

#### **Proverbs 18:24**

<sup>24</sup> A man *that hath* friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend *that* sticketh closer than a brother.

Our text states that “There is a friend...” and implies that this friend is available to all those who look for a friend.”

- Our Nature Direct Us to this Friend

When God created us in His image one of the things that He did in making us like Him is to give us a desire for relationships. God is a relational being and He placed that same quality in us. We see this in the Trinity and in God's relationship with Adam. And it is especially true when you consider why God created Eve.

**Genesis 2:18**

<sup>18</sup> And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

We are intended by God to have relationships and friends are one of the relationships that He intended for us to have.

- Our Need Demands that we Have Such a Friend

Illustration:

Several years ago on PBS there was a Library of Congress series. The program featured the National Archives and they were going to open sealed drawers in which had been deposited the evidence of famous crimes. Very dramatically they opened a drawer that had in it a sealed plastic bag with the effects of Abraham Lincoln from the night he was assassinated in Ford's Theater, April 9, 1865. He was watching a presentation of "Our American Cousin," when from the

rear of the Presidential Box he was shot by the best-known actor of that day, John Wilkes Booth. Booth jumped from the box onto the stage but ironically his boot spur got caught in the American flag draped in the front of the box. This caused him to fall onto the stage breaking his leg. What he said when he limped to center stage gives you an understanding of that time. He said, *Sic se per tyrannis* (Thus always to tyrants), the motto of Virginia. They put the box on top of the cabinet and opened the plastic container. It had not been opened since the trial of the assassins. They pulled out some keys, a handkerchief, a little pen knife, and a piece of paper all folded up and as the program went on they unfolded that paper. Remember it was being unfolded for the first time since the trial, on May 10, 1865. It was a newspaper clipping. And as they looked closer it was discovered that this was a newspaper clipping that was about Abraham Lincoln. As the commentator read the article it was discovered that Lincoln had underlined with a pencil the positive comments that were made about him. It was commented that he had read that paper and then cut it out with his penknife and stuck it in his pocket to read. Also, from the age of the paper it looked as if Lincoln had carried this article in his pocket for some time. Many people do not know what Abraham Lincoln went through during his presidency. First of all he was elected by only a 40% popular vote and then he had to virtually turn the presidency into a dictatorship for the first four years of his presidency to keep the country



together. He had many enemies and he was looking for friends. You would have thought that this dearest of all our presidents and the most integral to the thriving nation of America today would not have had a problem getting encouragement. Can you see Abraham Lincoln pulling out this little article and glancing at it from time to time to gain encouragement?

Everyone needs friendships.

## B. The Attributes of this Friend

- He is a Sympathetic Friend

### **Hebrews 4:15**

<sup>15</sup> For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin.

- He is a Steadfast Friend

### **Hebrews 13:4-5**

<sup>4</sup> Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. <sup>5</sup> *Let your conversation be* without covetousness; *and be* content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

### **Proverbs 17:17**

<sup>17</sup> A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

- He is a Strong Friend

**Proverbs 18:10**

<sup>10</sup>The name of the LORD *is* a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.

**Psalms 28:7**

<sup>7</sup>The LORD *is* my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

Illustration:

Again, the friendship of David and Jonathan in the Old Testament is legendary. It is an example of close friendship. We live in a day when the homosexual lifestyle and terminology is so in vogue that we tend to shy away from close friendships. David had to have a friend like Jonathan. David was a man destined for the throne of Israel. At an early age God's hand was upon David. He had been anointed to be king of Israel. Jonathan's father, King Saul learned very quickly that God's hand was upon David to be king. He did every thing he could to kill him to discourage him, to run him off.

One passage of scripture says:

**1 Samuel 23:16**

<sup>16</sup>And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God.

## C. The Accessibility to this Friend

### **Proverbs 18:24**

<sup>24</sup> A man *that hath* friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend *that* sticketh closer than a brother.

- He Will Accept Us

### **John 6:37**

<sup>37</sup> All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

Make no mistake, you and I are not acceptable because we are good but because of what the Lord has done for us.

### **Ephesians 2:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: <sup>9</sup> Not of works, lest any man should boast.

We find acceptance when we accept him by faith. When we trust him he receives us.

### **John 1:12**

<sup>12</sup> But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

- He Will Affirm Us

When you accept Jesus, not only will you find acceptance, but you will find affirmation, as well. Jesus never calls anyone to follow Him on the basis of who

they are, but on the basis of who He knows they can become by His power! As a result of your relationship, your friendship with Jesus, He will work to bring out the best in you.

Illustration:

A man had a warehouse property for sale. Vandals had smashed the windows, broken the doors and scattered trash all over the place. As he was showing a prospective buyer the property, he assured him that all would be repaired and made right before the sale was complete.

The man replied, "Don't worry about repairing anything. When I buy this place, I am going to build something completely different. I don't want the building, I want the site."

That is what the Lord says to us. He doesn't want us to try to repair things, He simply wants us to surrender ourselves to Him and let Him build out of our lives something new!

### **2 Corinthians 5:17**

<sup>17</sup> Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

- He Will Assist Us

## **Philippians 4:13**

<sup>13</sup> I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Jesus is the friend who sticketh closer than a brother.  
He's more than a brother.

A Brother can cry with you/Jesus can wipe away all  
your tears.

A Brother can pray with you/Jesus can answer your  
prayer.

A Brother can share your storm/Jesus can calm your  
storms.

A Brother can die for you/Jesus rose for you.

A Brother can be your lawyer/Jesus can set you free.

A Brother can carry your body to a dark grave/Jesus  
can carry your soul to Glory.

Close:

What a Friend we have in Jesus,  
all our sins and griefs to bear!

What a privilege to carry  
everything to God in prayer!

O what peace we often forfeit,

O what needless pain we bear,

All because we do not carry

everything to God in prayer.

Have we trials and temptations?

Is there trouble anywhere?

We should never be discouraged;  
take it to the Lord in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful  
who will all our sorrows share?

Jesus knows our every weakness;  
take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden,  
cumbered with a load of care?

Precious Savior, still our refuge,  
take it to the Lord in prayer.

Do your friends despise, forsake you?

Take it to the Lord in prayer!

In His arms He'll take and shield you;  
you will find a solace there.

Blessed Savior, Thou hast promised

Thou wilt all our burdens bear

May we ever, Lord, be bringing all to  
Thee in earnest prayer.

Soon in glory bright unclouded there  
will be no need for prayer

Rapture, praise and endless worship  
will be our sweet portion there.